

Revenge of the Nerds by TheMikeWheelers (jasongracefully)

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Summary:

It was time for the science fair of 1985, and the boys were determined to win.

Revenge of the Nerds

“What about something with how a ball can be thrown with the greatest velocity?”

“Dustin, seriously?! None of us can even throw a ball, how would we test that out?”

It was the first day of April, which meant only one thing to four goofy boys, the Roane County Science Fair was coming up. Dustin, Lucas, and Will had been pacing in Mike’s basement for hours now, desperately trying to find some idea that could defeat the damned Neil and Jeff Platz.

The Platz brothers were, as Lucas referred to them, their worst enemies. They’d never forget that spring in 1983, when they had lost the science fair for the first time against the Platz brothers and their cursed experiment on acid rain.

It was now almost time for their second science fair since then. The Platz brothers dropped out unexpectedly the year before, so while the boys were proud of their clear win, victory wasn’t so sweet without defeating those who had stolen that first-prize trophy from them once before.

Now the four boys were ready to take on Neil and Jeff, the science fair was a month away and they insisted they weren’t going to leave the basement until they at least had an idea. El had decided to stay with them too, she knew she wouldn’t be the biggest contributor to the project, having only started science classes herself a few months ago, but she wanted to help her friends in any way she could.

“I heard Miss Gorsh is gonna be a judge,” Lucas piped up, “She’s a health teacher, she’d love if we did something with nutrition or whatever.”

“But that’s so boring!” Dustin whined.

Will nodded, “Yeah, and I heard Neil and Jeff are doing an experiment on how video games affect your brain. Teachers are

gonna love that! We need something better.”

“Well then how about a potato clock?”

“Everyone does that!”

“Well we did a volcano two years ago and that’s what everyone does!”

“That was the year we lost!”

Mike leaned into the back of his seat, starting to tune out his friends’ bickering. He was unusually quiet today. Normally he was the bossiest, and according to Dustin, the most unbearable of all the boys to work with for the project, but things were different this year. Mike didn’t want to admit it, but he knew exactly why things were so different. This was the first year where El was with them for the science fair.

Right then, Mike would much rather go sit besides El on the couch and explain to her all the scientific concepts from their old projects than go join the debate about potato clocks or nutrition or whatever the other boys were bickering about.

Mike stood up and walked over towards El, who was currently staring at the floor, drowned out in her own thoughts.

“Hey El.” Her head snapped up upon hearing her name, “Eggo run?”

She nodded her head, giving her signature small smile that made Mike’s heart beat just a slight bit faster. She pushed herself off the couch and the two began to race up the steps.

Apparently it was heading upstairs that finally got the boys’ attention that Mike had left the table.

“Dude!” Lucas yelled, “What are you doing?”

“We’re just getting some waffles,” Mike shrugged.

“We said no one leaves the basement until we have an idea!”

Mike rolled his eyes in response, “We’re just getting food, we’ll be back faster than baking soda reacts with vinegar.”

And with that, he grabbed El’s hand and they continued their ascent up the stairs. When they entered the kitchen, El plopped herself into one of the seats by the table, while Mike grabbed two Eggos from the freezer and pushed them into the toaster. When he finished he sat down by El, taking the seat right across from her.

“I’m sorry we’re being so boring today,” He confessed, “We just really need to come up with an idea.”

El looked at him, smiling reassuringly, “You’re not boring. Are you sure you don’t have any ideas?”

Mike let out a deep sigh, of course he had ideas. They’d been doing the science fair for years now, he had even started to keep a journal filled with all the ideas he would get at random points throughout the years. But none of that mattered, because none of his ideas were good enough to beat the Platz brothers, and now his mind was empty of any more ideas.

Before he could respond, a loud ding echoed through the kitchen, signally the Eggos were ready. Mike looked over at the toaster, hesitating to walk over to it. Instead all the gears inside his brain began to turn, a rough idea slowly forming.

“Mike? Mike!”

El snapped her fingers in front of his face, pulling him from his trance.

“Are you okay?”

Mike looked over at her as a grin overtook his entire face, “I know what to do.”

The day of the science fair had arrived, and kids from all across the county had prepared their projects, ready to compete.

The boys were confident in their project though, they'd been working on it after school for weeks now. All it took was a little bit of brainstorming, a lot of hard work, and of course, just a few phone calls to Mr. Clarke, because even though he technically wasn't allowed to help them, he could never say no to his favorite students.

The judges were walking from table to table, with their pens and clipboards ready to find the new winner. Neil and Jeff Platz were proud of their project, with their large poster board filled with all their observations and research. However the boys, accompanied by El, were still confident in their own work.

When the judges finally came around to their table, the kids were practically jumping with anticipation.

"El, you wanna announce it?" Mike nudged her arm, and slowly she nodded her head, taking in a big breath.

"We'd like to present to you, the Eggo-Maker 2000!"

Lucas started to turn some dials on their invention, while Dustin pulled out the box of Eggos they'd kept hidden under the table.

For the past month, the kids had been working nonstop on their invention. It all started with dismantling the Wheeler's toaster, which Karen would lecture them for later. Then they got some advice from Mr. Clarke and went off to work. They weren't the handiest of kids, but Will had access to his family's tools, and Dustin, to their surprise, wasn't too bad with a screwdriver. Before they knew it, that old toaster had morphed into something new.

Will plopped the Eggo into the toaster and turned it on. The judges watched skeptically for a minute, wondering how toasting a frozen waffle was an experiment. But then when the bell dinged to signal that the Eggos were ready, instead of popping out the top as usual, the front of the toaster opened itself like a mailbox.

When it opened, it revealed a secret spot hidden on the inside of the toaster. A small plate was placed into the back of the the opening, and the cooked Eggos rested on top of it. Then when it seemed like it was finished, a small fountain of syrup began to rain from a hidden

compartment inside, covering the the waffles with the perfect amount of syrup before closing itself up.

When it was finished, Mike lifted the plate up and gave the Eggos to two of the judges, who were astounded at the invention. It wasn't a world-changing project, no, but they couldn't believe five eighth-graders were able to put this together.

They gave a small round of applause for the kids, who all laughed, proud of their invention, and silently grateful that it had worked, and hadn't gone terribly wrong as it had in Mike's nightmare the night before.

In the end, they were the clear winners of the science fair. The judges announced it at the end of the day, commending them for their innovation, creativity, and engineering.

The sweet, sweet victory against the Platz brothers that they had worked so long for was finally theirs, but by the end of the day, they only really cared about their celebration of even sweeter Eggos.